

# Ah, summer camp: fishing, hay rides, careers



State Journal/Suzanne Feliciano

**Benjamin Austin, 11, center, and Terrell Penny, 12, gave some pointers to Marquay Williams, 11, as he cast a fishing line into a pond Thursday at the Kentucky State University Research Farm. Children from KSU's land grant program camp learned about careers, took hay rides and ate ice cream**

## Math and science lessons blend with outdoor activities in program for middle schoolers at KSU research farm

By **MOLLY WILLIAMSON**  
State Journal Staff Writer

Ricky Bottoms and his friends went fishing, launched bottle rockets, toured the Georgetown Toyota plant, visited the Louisville Science Center, saw a laser light show at a planetarium and had the opportunity to go up in a hot air balloon this week.

When asked what he learned, he could not really recall.

"I don't think we've learned much about math and science," said the Louisville seventh-grader Thursday, rethreading his fishing pole so he could cast another line and catch his fourth fish at the KSU Research Farm.

However, he and his fellow campers did pick up some academic pointers in Kentucky State University's Pathways and Access to Careers in Technology,

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**—Rachael Steward,**  
interim program director

said Rachael Steward, interim program director. The weeklong camp was based on exposing some of the state's brightest middle schoolers to various careers involving math, science and technology.

The camp agenda kept the students moving, Steward said. Rarely did they have a chance to sit and reflect on their experiences.

They were constantly completing hands-on activities, taking field trips,

horseback riding, playing soccer or volleyball or swimming, Steward said. The only times they sat for an extended period was when they researched in the library — and even that was limited.

At the farm, the students learned about the pawpaw fruit and about how technology has changed the agriculture industry, Steward said. For example, farmers can program their tractors to mow certain portions of their field so they do not have to be out all night. They learned about fish breeding and KSU's effort to introduce fish harvesting to former tobacco farmers.

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The program also focuses heavily on critical thinking, Steward said. For example, the sixth-grade students learned about

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## KSU mixes fun, learning

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transportation and were required to create several different types of cars including a mousetrap car and a solar powered car.

Advocate Scott, a Louisville sixth-grader, said he was glad he came to the camp. He met new friends, had new experiences and enjoyed learning about technology.

"If you learn about what is happening now in technology, it gives you a picture of what will happen in the future," Scott said.

He also said much of today's technology can aid people when they are in trouble. For example, if people's cars break down, they can use a cell phone. If they are lost, they can use a global positioning system to find their way.

"It is amazing, because those things were not around as much

in the 1970s and 1980s," Scott said. "It is cool to see how technology has evolved."

Good Shepherd School eighth-grader Nneka Amadife of Frankfort has always wanted to become a surgeon.

"I like the human body," she said.

Surgeons rely on technology not only for X-rays to see the problem ahead of time, but also to maneuver in tight spaces.

However, if she were not so sure about her career choice, Amadife said the camp would have enlightened her about the many different career opportunities involving technology.

"It is important to understand technology, how it can help you today and how it has advanced through the years," Amadife said. "Technology affects everyone's life."

Lawrenceburg seventh-grader Allison Parrent said she learned a lot about technology, particularly in her research project with her seventh-grade group. They explored how robots are used in today's business world and where robots may be used in the future. She said it was interesting to know robots play such a major role in industry.

However, she was mostly just having fun, playing soccer, riding horses, swimming and meeting new people.

"I didn't think it was going to be as fun as it is," Parrent said about the camp. "I am really glad I came. I just wanted to meet new people, because I already know everyone in Lawrenceburg. I only knew one person when I came and now I have all of these friends."